

## Message Text

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72

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 IO-10 SCA-01 VO-03 DPW-01

FDRE-00 AID-05 A-01 OPR-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SSO-00 /081 W

----- 074003

R 181209Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2991

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL UDORN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 6785

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, TH, CB, VS

SUBJ: CAMBODIAN AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE REFUGEES IN EASTERN THAILAND

SUMMARY: LOCAL THIA OFFICIALS REPORT THE SITUATION ALONG THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE THAI/CAMBODIAN BORDER REMAINED NORMAL APRIL 15-16, BUT THEY HAVE PLANS TO COPE WITH A SURGE OF REFUGEES IF IT OCCURS. A SMALL NUMBER OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES HAVE SETTLED IN TRAT PROVINCE, AND 16 REFUGEES FROM DANANG RECENTLY ARRIVED THERE BY BOAT. OUR FINDINGS DO NOT SUPPORT OFFICIAL BANGKOK CLAIMS THAT LARGE NUMBERS OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES PROCEEDING OVERLAND HAVE ALREADY ENTERED THAILAND, BUT THEY DO NOT RULE OUT SUCH A SITUATION IN THE FUTURE.  
END SUMMARY

1. EMBASSY OFFICERS VISITED PRACHINBURI, CHANTHABURI, TRAT, AND RAYONG PROVINCES APRIL 15-16 TO DISCUSS WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS THE REFUGEE SITUATION ALONG THE THAI/CAMBODIAN  
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BORDER AND THE EASTERN COASTLINE OF THE GULF OF SIAM.

ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICIALS, THE BORDER REMAINED OPEN IN THESE AREAS, AND THERE HAD BEEN NO RECENT SURGE OF REFUGEES INTO THAILAND. THE RTG CONTINUED TO PERMIT CAMBODIANS TO ENTER THAI TERRITORY UP TO 25 KILOMETERS FROM THE BORDER, PROVIDED THEY RETURN THE SAME DAY. POLICE OFFICIALS IN PRACHINBURI RECENTLY DECIDED TO APPREHEND, FINE, AND RETURN ANY CAMBODIANS WHO OVERSTAY THEIR PERMITTED VISITS. THE ROYAL THAI ARMY FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION IN PRACHINBURI HAS A PLAN TO DISARM FANK TROOPS IF THEY ATTEMPT A MASS EXODUS INTO THAILAND, AND TO DETAIN THEM AT LOCAL TEMPLES AND SCHOOLS. LOCAL OFFICIALS ALSO REPORTED THAT THERE IS A SIZABLE REFUGEE SETTLEMENT NEAR POIPET IN CAMBODIA WHICH HAS BUILT UP OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS.

2. A SMALL NUMBER OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES HAVE SETTLED IN TRAT PROVINCE. GOVERNOR PRUTHIPHONG CHAIYASOTTHI TOLD US THAT THERE ARE ABOUT 500 CAMBODIAN REFUGEES IN TRAT, BUT IN CONVERSATIONS WITH DISTRICT OFFICERS WE WERE ABLE TO ACCOUNT FOR ONLY ABOUT 250. MOST OF THESE ARE CAMBODIAN MUSLIMS WHO ARRIVED IN TRAT BY SEA ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, AND ARE LIVING WITH THAI MUSLIM RELATIVES IN THE PROVINCE. A SMALL NUMBER OF CAMBODIANS WITH MONEY HAVE ALSO ENTERED THE PROVINCE IN RECENT MONTHS, AND MADE THEIR WAY TO BANGKOK OR OTHER DESTINATIONS. GKR OFFICIALS FROM NEIGHBORING KOH KONG PROVINCE HAVE VISITED TRAT TO OBSERVE THE REFUGEES' NEEDS.

3. OFFICIALS IN TRAT ALSO MENTIONED THAT A BOAT WITH 16 ETHNIC CHINESE FROM DANANG ARRIVED IN KLONG YAI DISTRICT OF TRAT APRIL 13. LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE DETAINING THEM PENDING INSTRUCTIONS FROM BANGKOK. THESE REFUGEES TOLD LOCAL OFFICIALS THT IF THAILAND WILL NOT ACCEPT THEM, THEY WILL GO TO TAIWAN WHERE THEY HAVE RELATIVES.

4. COMMENT: OUR SOUNDINGS IN EASTERN THAILAND DO NOT SUPPORT STATEMENTS OF RTG OFFICIALS IN BANGKOK THAT AS MANY AS 50,000 REFUGEES FROM CAMBODIA HAVE ENTERED THAILAND. IF THE FALL OF PHNOM PENH RESULTS IN STEPPED-UP MILITARY ACTIVITY NEAR THE THAI BORDER, LARGER NUMBERS OF REFUGEES MAY ENTER THAILAND, AND LOCAL OFFICIALS ARE PLANNING TO  
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COPE WITH SUCH A SITUATION. ADDITIONAL REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM MAY ALSO ATTEMPT TO REACH THAILAND BY SEA.  
MASTERS

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** SREF, PINT, TH, CB, VS  
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